

## Remarks

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that “an” identifying characteristic is inputted “from” a user and to refer to “the check criteria” in the last element thereof. No substantive change is intended by these amendments. In addition, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the identifying characteristic is checked “as it is being inputted” for conformance with one or more check criteria (page 5, lines 15-18).

Claim 3 has been amended to recite that the notification to the user is effected by offering the user a facility to “select” the inputted data “for transmission to the identifying characteristic checking device” and that this data is only transmitted to the identifying characteristic processing device when it is “selected for transmission thereto”. This is believed to be an improvement over the “terminate input” language, which the Examiner has apparently taken to refer to the Cancel function (24 in Fig. 1) rather than to the OK function (23) as was intended. No substantive change is intended.

Claim 6 has been amended in a manner similar to that of claim 1 as well as to conform its language to that of claim 1.

Claim 7 has been amended to recite (in a manner similar to that of claim 2) that the user is informed “during input” of whether the entered data meets the check criteria.

Claim 8 has been amended in a manner similar to that of claim 3 to refer to a facility for “selecting” the inputted data “for transmission to the identifying characteristic processing device”.

New claim 11, dependent on claim 1, recites that the transmitting step comprises the steps of: (1) enabling a “user-actuated selection facility” (“OK” button 23) upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria (step 3120); and (2) transmitting the inputted identifying characteristic to the identifying characteristic processing device upon actuation of the selection facility by the user (steps 3140 and 3150).

New claim 12, dependent on claim 11, recites further that the identifying characteristic is a password (Fig. 2) and that one of the check criteria is a matching of a first entry of the password with a second entry of the password (step 3110).

New claim 13, dependent on claim 1, recites that the identifying characteristic is transmitted to the identifying characteristic processing device “without user intervention” upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria (page 28, line 23 to page 9, line 1).

New claim 14 is a “program product” claim, directed to a program storage device containing a program executable by a machine to perform the method steps of claim 1.

Finally, new claims 15 and 16 are similar to claim 11 and 13, respectively, but depend on device claim 13.

Claims 1-10 as amended and new claims 11-16 are believed to distinguish patentably over the Limsico patent (U.S. Patent 5,793,952) cited by the Examiner. Limsico describes a password change interface in which a new password is checked against criteria not as it is being entered, as claimed by applicants, but only after the user explicitly selects the password at step 5130 (Fig. 5A) for transmission to the remote machine. The Limsico system is thus incapable either of indicating to the user that the data is ready to be transmitted (as recited in claims 2-3, 7, 11-12 and 15) or transmitting correctly entered data without user intervention (as recited in claims 13 and 16).

Claims 2-3 and 7 are further believed to distinguish patentably over the art cited by virtue of their recitation that the user is notified or informed “during input” on whether the inputted data meets the check criteria. In Limsico, as already noted, the user only receives such confirmation after he has selected the data for transmission by selecting the Set button.

Claim 3, dependent on claim 2, is further believed to distinguish patentably over Limsico for this reason, as well as for its recitations relating to the user selection facility, for reasons similar to those urged with respect to claims 11 and 15.

Claims 11 and 15 are further believed to distinguish patentably over Limsico by virtue of their recitations that a user-actuated selection facility is enabled upon inputting of data meeting the check criteria and that the inputted data is transmitted to the processing device upon actuation of the selection facility by the user. In applicants' claimed system, the user is assured that he has correctly entered data before he causes it to be transmitted to another device. By contrast, in Limsico, the process is the other way around: the user must enter correct data and select the Set button before the checking even starts.

Claim 12, dependent on claim 11, is further believed to distinguish patentably over the art cited for the same reasons as claim 11, as well as for its recitations that the identifying characteristic is a password and that one of the check criteria is a matching of a first entry of the password with a second entry of the password. In applicants' claimed system, enablement of a selection facility such as "OK" button 23 assures the user that he has correctly entered an eligible password twice and that he need only actuate the selection facility to transmit the new password. In the Limsico system, by contrast, even when a user has successfully entered an eligible password once and selected the Set button, he must still re-enter the password and select the Set button once again (Fig. 5C) before he learns whether he has successfully entered the required values.

Claims 13 and 16 are further believed to distinguish patentably over Limsico by virtue of their recitation that the identifying characteristic is transmitted "without user intervention" upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria. As noted in applicants' specification at page 9, lines 1-4, such a system can be highly advantageous, especially in the case of biometric identifying characteristics, for example when scanning fingerprints. The Limsico system is inherently incapable of operating in this manner, however, since the criterion check is never performed until after the user has explicitly selected the identifying data for transmission to the remote machine.

## Conclusion

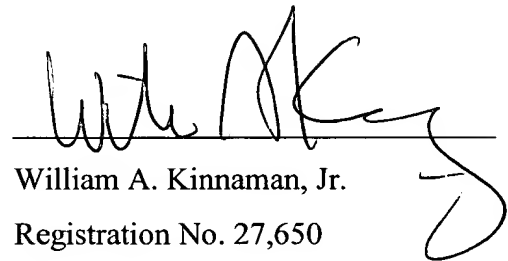
For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-10 as amended and new claims 11-16 are believed to distinguish patentably over the Limsico patent cited by the Examiner.

Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. It is hoped that upon such consideration, the Examiner will hold all claims allowable and pass the case to issue at an early date. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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